

By Rev.  
Frank De Witt Talmage, D. D.

**A Neglected Vineyard.**

There might have been some excuse for the sick man who owned this neglected vineyard of which I have spoken to have neglected his vineyard, but there is no excuse for us neglect our spiritual vineyards, as the author of Canticles declares the work of God has been doing. Now, we all, each fall, delight to eat the delicious grapes which are placed on our dining room tables I thought this morning I would draw my sermonic illustrations from the vineyard industries of the world. My comparisons will not be found in the grapevines which some of us raise in our country homes, where we build a little or in our back yards and there grow a few vines to grow over it, after which we flee to escape the intense heat of the midnoon sun. But I draw my illustrations from the grape industries of southern California and the Holy Land, where grape growing is a business upon an engaged scale, and where the vines, laid in long rows 8 by 8 or 8 by 10, stretch themselves over hundreds and sometimes thousands upon thousands of acres, as the cornfields spread themselves over the prairies of Kansas or the wheatfields grow in the Dakotas. Many of the oriental cities like Saffia were nothing more or less than centers for this grape industry. The plains of Abel-Keramin were sometimes called "The Plains of Vineyards." The grapes of the valley of Jezreel not only made their vines climb over all the hillsides and the lowlands between Hebron and Kadesh, but those grapes were famous for their sweetness as well as for their purity. Thus we have not only a picture of the vineyard industry from which to draw sermonic comparisons, but we have the grapes, which formed the basis of the chief industries of the Jewish race. "Mine own vineyard, which I have not kept" should offer a vital message for all Christians.

The words which introduce my text are: "My mother's children are angry with me. They made me keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept." That is the word picture of a son who has been left the executor of his father's estate. The last sickness has come. The funeral is over. The will has been read. The will goes something thuswise: "This is my last will and testament. If I should be called suddenly away, I leave all my vineyards to my children, share and share alike. But that these properties may be made to pay their maximums, I leave my oldest son as the executor

**A Better Inheritance.**

Do not tell me that when your Christian father died he left you no inheritance. You say, "When he died the farm went to my elder brother." But your father's greatest asset was not in his farm. You say, "He had a little money—a few thousand dollars—but he left all that to my mother and invalid sister." But your father's estate had more than money. You inherited his spiritual vineyard. You have inherited his example of a Christian life well lived. You have inherited the example of the joy and peace which come to a noble Christian man who, in every word he speaks and in every deed he does, speaks and lives for God. Am I wrong in declaring that the vineyards which have come to you are inherited vineyards? Your inherited spiritual vineyards are as old as the prayers your father made on the day he first knelt at the communion of the Lord's supper. They are as old as the prayers he made on the day he dedicated you to God when you were baptized at the church altars. They are as old as the prayers he made for you at the family altar on the day you left the old homestead. They are as old as the blessing and benediction he gave when he put his trembling hand upon your head on the day he died, when he said, "My boy, I gave you to God when you were born; I give you to God now that I must leave you to stand before the Judgment seat of Christ." Oh, my friends, what a spiritual blessing has

negro compatriots, the purity and meanness of domestic slavery, the mechanical and agricultural usefulness of the freedman, and the citizenship of the colored people, and Christian belief. Our Christian mothers believe in Paul, who named the ancient disciples in his Corinthian epistle, "Let your women keep silence in church, for it is not permitted unto them to speak," but their daughters will not be debarr'd from service, so they find work for France, E. Willard, and a Frances H. Mergal and a Susan R. Anthony and a Maud Booth and for thousands upon thousands of noble women and young girls, who are pleading for Christ in our midweek prayer meetings, and who are working in our rescue missions, and who are the leaders of our social settlements, our Christian Endeavor societies and our Epworth leagues. Oh, my dear friends, our Christian fathers and mothers did a mighty work for Christ in the times in which they lived. But what greater gospel work are you doing? What further mission fields are you reaching? Is the social outcast problem nearer being solved than when your Christian ancestors died? Are the black man and the yellow man and the red man and the peasant and the saloon keeper nearer to Christ than they were half a century ago? What new vines of gospel usefulness have you planted for Christ, which are now bringing forth their great clusters of Eschcol grapes for the heavenly wine press? Are most of your rich fields, rich in soils of knowl-

**A Word of Caution.** Some other word of caution. Some men are busy in the Sunday school, and we thank God for such helpers. Some are regularly at church and at the prayer meeting, and most devoutly do the pastor rejoice over such members. But do not neglect your own vineyards. When your children grow up let them not have to say, "My father was never at home; he did not do anything for his religious training." May you never have to say in your old age, "My son has a vagabond and a wanderer; my daughter

Dr. Nordet, chief physician at the Brabant Pasteur Institute, has informed the Belgium Academy that he has positively discovered a serum to prevent whooping cough.

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**STATE OF VERMONT, District of Chittenden.**

To all persons interested in the estate of Margaret C. Harrington, late of Burlington, in said district deceased,

I, **GREETING:**

At a Probate Court, holden at Burlington, within and for the District of Chittenden, on the 10th day of October, 1906, an instrument purporting to be the last will and testament of MARGARET C. HARRINGTON, late of Burlington, in said district, deceased, was presented to the court aforesaid, by one JAMES A. BINGHAM.

And it is ordered by said court that the 31st day of October, 1906, at said Burlington, be given in aid of probate; and be assigned for said probate instrument; and that notice thereof be given, and copies thereof be served, by publishing this order three weeks successively in the Burlington Free Press, a newspaper published at said Burlington, previous to the time herein provided for.

Therefore, you are hereby notified to appear before said court, at the time aforesaid, to demand and contest the validity of said will, if you have cause thereunto; or to signify your assent thereto under my hand at Burlington, Vermont, this 11th day of October, 1906.

**MARCELLUS A. BINGHAM**, Clerk.

11-13-06